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COVID-19

56% of Businesses Surveyed Sought PPP Funds

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**PAYCHECK
PROTECTION
PROGRAM**



Some 56 percent of business executives said their companies had sought relief funds through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a \$660 billion initiative under the

CARES Act designed to protect small businesses and their employees, a survey by the American Institute of CPAs found.

The PPP was far and away the most popular form of pandemic-related aid sought, followed by the Small Business Administration's Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program at 8 percent, according to the latest AICPA Economic Outlook Survey, [topline results](#) of which were released last week. Some 35 percent of survey respondents said they hadn't applied for government relief.

In the above chart, respondents could check all categories that applied, so the numbers do not add up to 100 percent. The "other" category includes advance Medicare payments, employer payroll tax deferral, employee retention credit and nonprofit grants, among other items.

The AICPA Economic Outlook Survey polls chief executive officers, chief financial officers, controllers and other certified public accountants in U.S. companies who hold executive and senior management accounting roles. Two-thirds of the companies these executives represent are privately owned entities, with the rest a mix of publicly listed companies and not-for-profits.

"The overwhelming majority – 92 percent – of executives in our survey said their companies had been impacted negatively by the pandemic," said Ash Noah, CPA, CGMA, managing director of CGMA learning, education and development for the Association of International Certified Professional Accountants. "The survey results give a snapshot of how they've coped so far, with many relying on a mix of relief programs, cost containment and business continuity strategies."

Sixty-one percent of survey respondents said their companies had kept their employment levels and pay structure intact, presumably in part due to the widespread use of PPP and related programs. Others had furloughed or laid off employees or instituted pay cuts, among other tactics.

The above chart was also "check all that apply." For the "other steps" category, respondents listed such examples as:

- Reduction in force for indirect and support areas
- Reduced hours, OT hours, 4-day workweeks
- Merit increases, bonuses, profit-sharing eliminated
- Salary freeze, hiring freeze
- Eliminated contractors, offered early retirement

- Bonuses, hazard pay, premium pay, thank you bonus, stay bonus
- Product offerings revised

The AICPA and a [small business funding coalition](#) it led were strong advocates of the PPP and worked to help speed and simplify its implementation through a series of recommendations and the development of a loan forgiveness calculator for the program.

“Our stance from the beginning was that it was vital to get money into the hands of small businesses quickly to ensure that their lights stayed on and their employees were protected,” said Erik Asgeirsson, president of CPA.com, the AICPA’s business and technology arm. “The Economic Outlook Survey data suggests that approach has been largely effective.”

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